



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thirsty Lincoln men celebrated his nomination 150 years ago this month

***Documents from May 1860 Republican Convention on display in
Presidential Museum show the bar tab and other expenses for the
rowdy delegates in Chicago***

SPRINGFIELD – For a man who didn't smoke or drink, Abraham Lincoln's Republican Presidential nomination in Chicago 150 years ago this week certainly caused Illinois delegates to celebrate, as documents recently acquired by the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum show.

On May 18, 1860 Abraham Lincoln was nominated on the third ballot to be the Presidential candidate for the Republican Party. According to Murat Halstead, chronicler of the convention, Chicago "went wild with delight...Torrents of liquor were poured down the hoarse throats of the multitude." Newly surfaced receipts acquired by the Lincoln Collection at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum reveal how much was spent on the liquor and cigar tab for entertaining delegates throughout the convention that led to Lincoln's capturing the nomination.

The items have been placed on display in the Presidential Museum's Treasures Gallery to commemorate the 150th anniversary of his Republican nomination.

The \$321.50 bill was submitted by the Tremont House, Lincoln's Chicago campaign headquarters, to Ward Hill Lamon, a Danville lawyer and close associate of Lincoln, and Ozias Mather Hatch, the Illinois Secretary of State and Lincoln's Springfield friend. The Chicago Convention was known for its political theater, arm-twisting and deal-making, often over liquor and cigars. The following bill reflects the cost of politics:

Parlor No. 7 – 5 days @25	125.00
Brandy 42 Whisky 18	60.
Cigars 7.00 6.00 6.00	19.
Whisky 6.00 Brandy 14.00	20.
Cigars 6.00 Whisky 1.50	7.50
Brandy 21.00 Whisky 9.00	30.
Wine 24.00 12.00 24.00	<u>60.</u>
	321.50

Paid
Gage. Bro & Drake
Badger

“The combination of warm weather that week in Chicago, the crowding in the Wigwam and hotels, and the surprise of dark-horse candidate Lincoln getting the nod all led his supporters to raise a toast. More than one, it seems,” said James M. Cornelius, curator of the Lincoln Collection at the Presidential Library.

Another receipt for William Butler, a good friend of Lincoln who attended the Convention, is appended to the Tremont House bill. It is for 6 ³/₄ days of boarding at a total of \$17.00.

On May 19, a delegation from the Republican National Convention led by George Ashmun of Massachusetts took the train to Springfield to inform Abraham Lincoln of his nomination. The delegation stayed at the Chenery House, compiling a bill of \$97 for meals and rooms. Mary Lincoln had purchased liquor for members of the delegation as part of her entertaining them after the formal notification ceremonies at Lincoln’s home. But several political associates warned Lincoln that some members of the delegation probably were temperance men and that only ice water should be served, a suggestion that Lincoln heeded.

“These items cast light on an aspect of 19th Century politics that you won’t find among Lincoln’s own writings and papers. They are a wonderful addition to our collection, showing how politics was practiced at its most fundamental level,” said Thomas F. Schwartz, Illinois State Historian.

The two Tremont House and one Chenery House documents were acquired from a long-time private collector of Illinois historical materials. The purchase was made using private donations, not state dollars. They are now part of the 52,000-item Lincoln Collection at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, the world’s largest pre-presidential Lincoln collection, and are being displayed in the nation’s most visited Presidential Museum.

For more information on the Presidential Library and Museum, visit www.presidentlincoln.org.

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(EDITORS: Please email dave.blanchette@illinois.gov for JPEG images of the three documents).